

Madison Eagle

Puffing away at public places in Madison is now against law

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By Sally Capone, Staff Writer

MADISON – Anyone who lights up in or around any municipal buildings, public parks or recreational areas in the borough, will be breaking the law.

The Borough Council unanimously adopted an ordinance on second reading Wednesday, Nov. 13, that prohibits smoking in those areas and amends Chapter 163 of the borough code entitled “Smoking.”

The action was applauded by Alan Kantz, the program manager at Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy (GASP) based in Summit and a 2010 graduate of Drew University in Madison.

“People seem to really like this,” he told the council. “Over and over again they expect it as the norm, and are shocked that they lived any other way.”

A 100 percent smoke-free park ordinance is already on the books in 10 Morris County communities: Butler, Chatham Borough, Chatham Township, Denville, Hanover Township, Jefferson Township, Long Hill Township, Mount Arlington, Mount Olive Township and Rockaway, Kantz noted.

120 Communities

“To date, more than 120 New Jersey communities make all of their parks and recreational areas 100 percent smoke-free,” he said. “As of May 2011, all New York City parks and recreational areas, including the beaches, boardwalks and marinas, are 100 percent smoke-free,” Kantz added.

He said the benefits of a smoke-free environment include setting a healthy example for children and protecting people from second-hand smoke.

“This policy enhances your municipality’s clean, green, safe and enjoyable outdoor recreational areas, protects government property from preventable fire and tobacco waste and can reduce maintenance costs by minimizing tobacco litter in recreational areas,” Kantz said. The policy is self-enforcing, relying on clear signage posted to give the public notice. GASP Executive Director Karen Blumenfeld brought a sample example of free metal signage available to the borough to the Nov. 13 council meeting.

GASP is a nonprofit organization with a mission of promoting smoke-free air and tobacco-free lives. In 2009, GASP updated the meaning of its acronym from “Group Against Smoking Pollution” to Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy to better reflect its mission.

GASP provided technical assistance for the passage of the 2006 New Jersey Smoke-free Air Act and many other tobacco control laws, including the New Jersey 100 percent Smoke-free Residential College Housing Law. New Jersey was the first state to enact such a law.

http://newjerseyhills.com/madison_eagle/news/puffing-away-at-public-places-in-madison-is-now-against/article_4d6b8dd2-529b-11e3-a379-001a4bcf887a.html